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28<sup>th</sup> October, 2012

Professor Simon Chapman  
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Dear Professor Chapman,

**RE: Your opinions on the adverse health effects of wind turbines**

Your recent wind turbine opinion piece in the New Scientist<sup>1</sup>, together with your media commentary in other articles, interviews and comments on blogs,<sup>2</sup> purport to be “the truth” about this subject. However my knowledge of the problems, **obtained directly from sick residents including turbine hosts<sup>3</sup>** and some of their treating doctors, rather than indirect sources, is in stark contrast.

I would be obliged if you will direct me to the population studies or even small case control studies, which have been performed in the vicinity of large operating wind turbines, confirming that there are no adverse health effects for any of the residents from these wind turbines, including sleep deprivation, stress related illnesses, and symptoms of vestibular dysfunction.

I believe there are no such studies.

Are you prepared to explain why you do not reference the peer reviewed published work of Dr Daniel Shepherd and his colleagues,<sup>4</sup> when you discuss the evidence for damage to health caused by industrial wind turbines in your public statements? Shepherd’s work was published a year ago, in October, 2011. As you will see when you read it, there is incontrovertible evidence of sleep disturbance and adverse impacts on health - related quality of life in wind turbine neighbours, when compared with these indicators in rural residents who do not live in the environs of an industrial wind development. This is entirely consistent with my knowledge, and the knowledge of a growing number of medical practitioners around the world.

Perhaps it is your view that chronic sleep disturbance, such as is commonly reported by residents living near industrial wind turbines, and confirmed by Dr Shepherd, does not result directly in serious adverse health problems? If so, then you are in conflict with the current peer reviewed clinical evidence,<sup>5</sup> and WHO guidelines.

Will you also explain why you and your co - reviewer of the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council's "Rapid Review 2010",<sup>6</sup> which purported to be a "review of the peer reviewed evidence" available at the time, managed to cite a blog of yours, but failed to include the most important literature review detailing the peer reviewed published research of the then known adverse health impacts of low frequency noise on human health, written in 2003 for the UK Department of Food and Rural Affairs?<sup>7</sup> Your co - reviewer, Professor Leventhall was the lead author of this important work, so he certainly knew about it in 2010.

Did you know about this work and choose to exclude it from the Rapid Review, or were you unaware of its existence?

I draw your attention to page 49 of the 2003 Leventhall Literature Review, where there is a table listing the symptoms reported by residents in a case control study looking at the effect of exposure to low frequency noise from other sources. There is other relevant research performed by Leventhall and others in an occupational setting, which confirms these findings.

Professor Leventhall, your co - reviewer, has publicly stated in expert testimony given in court in Ontario,<sup>8</sup> and also in the NHMRC workshop<sup>9</sup> which you and I both attended in June 2011, that he has known about the symptoms of low frequency noise exposure or "wind turbine syndrome" for some time, and it is clear from his literature review from 2003 that this statement is correct.

On what grounds, as a sociologist, rather than an acoustician or a medical practitioner, do you disagree with Leventhall's expert testimony in the Suncor case in Ontario, confirming the existence of this pattern of symptoms, which he clearly attributes to being caused by exposure to low frequency noise?

*"... Pierpont defined the symptoms of the Wind Turbine Syndrome as: "... sleep disturbance, headache, tinnitus, ear pressure, dizziness, vertigo, nausea, visual blurring, tachycardia, irritability, problems with concentration and memory, and panic episodes associated with sensations of internal pulsation or quivering when awake or asleep."  
"I am happy to accept these symptoms, as they have been known to me for many years as the symptoms of extreme psychological stress from environmental noise, particularly low frequency noise " <sup>10</sup> (emphasis added)*

On numerous occasions<sup>11</sup> you have publicly accused me of "scaremongering" and have implied that my efforts to **educate the general public about what is already known** about the damaging effects of infrasound and low frequency noise from wind turbines and other sources, is itself **causing** all the reported symptoms. This is a very grave accusation to make. What is your evidence to support this allegation?

Will you please acknowledge that I was first aware of reported health problems in May/June 2010, first spoke out publicly of my concerns on 18<sup>th</sup> July, 2010, and acknowledge that there are many media reports about sick people at Waubra and other locations internationally prior to this date. <sup>12</sup>

Perhaps you also blame the reported symptoms on the first whistle blower Medical Practitioners Dr Amanda Harry (UK) and Dr David Iser, (Australia) as you appear to imply in your recent opinion piece in the New Scientist.<sup>13</sup> Will you please explain to Dr Harry, Dr Iser, and myself, how the limited media reports at the time, which appeared well **after** their studies had been conducted, could have caused the symptoms in their patients **months earlier**?

With regard to your repeated comments about the existence or otherwise of confidentiality clauses, which might prevent people affected by the wind turbines from speaking out about their health problems, I draw your attention to the following letter from the General Manager of Slater and Gordon, published in The Australian Newspaper on 4<sup>th</sup> May, 2012.<sup>14</sup>

*"James Delingpole asserts that Slater and Gordon have been responsible for "rigorous gagging orders" in favour of wind farm operators. This is wrong. **We have acted for landowners who have been affected by the operation of nearby wind farms.***

*Any confidentiality clauses associated with some compensation claims have not been made at our direction. **Such clauses are required by the wind farm operators and are typically required in these types of settlements.** It is a decision for our clients as to whether they accept such clauses."*

**James Higgins, general manager, Slater and Gordon, Melbourne, Vic** (emphasis added)

I would also draw your attention to the comments Professor Leventhall made in his 2003 DEFRA Literature review (p 60) concerning the damaging effects on the mental health of those whose symptoms are denied:

*"There is no doubt that some humans exposed to infrasound experience abnormal ear, CNS, and resonance induced symptoms that are real and stressful. If this is not recognised by investigators or their treating physicians, **and properly addressed with understanding and sympathy, a psychological reaction will follow and the patient's problems will be compounded.**"* (emphasis added)<sup>15</sup>

I assure you that your frequent denigrating comments,<sup>16</sup> widely broadcast in the media, towards and about sick people are indeed directly and significantly compounding their health problems. This is an unnecessary addition to the symptoms of physical and mental illness these people are already experiencing directly from the effects of the infrasound and low frequency acoustic pollution.

I know this occurs, because some of them contact me, in a very distressed state. Some of these people are unable to live in their homes, and unable to do their usual work because of the severity of their symptoms correlating directly with exposure to the noise pollution. Some of them are elderly and frail, and are suffering terribly.

There have been a number of occasions where people have rung in desperation, expressing acutely suicidal thoughts, as they are trapped in homes where their physical and mental health relentlessly deteriorates with continued exposure, and they have nowhere else to go, and cannot afford to just walk away. These people consistently feel better when the turbines are off, or when they are well away from the turbines. This is entirely consistent with repeated clinical observations, and with Professor Leventhall's comments in his 2003 DEFRA literature review on page 60.

This growing public health problem, caused by industrial noise in frequencies below 200 Hz from a range of sources including wind turbines, mining, gas compressors and gas - fired power stations, warrants a compassionate response.

Please immediately stop denigrating seriously ill people. It is harming their health.

Please use your position as "Director of Research" constructively, to advocate for the necessary multidisciplinary research so urgently needed.

Yours sincerely



Dr Sarah Laurie  
CEO, Waubra Foundation

1. Opinion piece 8 October, 2012, New Scientist Magazine Issue 2885, pp 26-7 "Sickened by the Spin" Online version "The sickening truth about wind farm syndrome" <http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg21628850.200-the-sickening-truth-about-wind-farm-syndrome.html> , also broadcast on ABC Radio National's Science show, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2012, <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/scienceshow/curious-distribution-for-wind-turbine-sickness/4323486>
2. Some examples in addition to the New Scientist piece include the following:  
"Wind turbine sickness prevented by money drug" 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2011 <http://www.abc.net.au/unleashed/45730.html>  
"Wind Turbines Power Mass Hysteria" 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2011 <http://www.abc.net.au/unleashed/4028112.html>  
" Is wind turbine syndrome Mass Hysteria?" 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2011 <http://www.abc.net.au/unleashed/2868198.html>  
Interview with Waleed Aly, on RN Drive, 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2012 <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/drive/panel-discussion3a-the-health-impact-of-wind-power/4066594>  
<http://theconversation.edu.au/wind-turbine-syndrome-a-classic-communicated-disease-8318>
3. David and Alida Mortimer, turbine hosts from Infigen's Lake Bonney Wind Development in South Australia spoke about their health problems resulting from exposure to operating wind turbines on TV <http://www.todaytonightadelaide.com.au/?page=Story&StoryID=1394> and David spoke on National Radio <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/breakfast/regulations-killing-victorian-wind-farms/4155732>. Professor Chapman has repeatedly claimed that the symptoms result from jealousy of neighbours, and implied that no wind turbine hosts develop illnesses. This is untrue. Other hosts have contacted the Waubra Foundation for help, and have said they are unable to speak publicly about their health problems because of the terms of their agreements with the wind developer. At their request, and for obvious reasons, their information remains confidential.
4. **Shepherd, Daniel et al** "Evaluating the impact of wind turbine noise on health-related quality of life" Noise & Health, September-October 2011, 13:54,333-9 <http://www.wind-watch.org/documents/evaluating-the-impact-of-wind-turbine-noise-on-health-related-quality-of-life/>
5. **Capuccio F et al**, "Sleep Duration predicts cardiovascular outcomes: a systemic review and meta-analysis of prospective studies" European Heart Journal, (2011) 32, 1484-1492
6. NHMRC "Wind Turbines and Health, A Rapid Review of the Evidence" July 2010  
Downloadable from <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/your-health/wind-farms-and-human-health>

7. **Leventhall, Benton & Pelmeur** May 2003, A report for DEFRA "A review of published Research on Low Frequency Noise and its Effects" <http://www.wind-watch.org/documents/review-of-published-research-on-low-frequency-noise-and-its-effects/>
8. **Dr. Leventhall**, (2009), "Wind Turbine Syndrome, an Appraisal," Erickson v. Director, Ministry of the Environment (10-121 and 10-122) Exhibit 55 submitted by Suncor Energy Services Inc.
9. Presentation accessible via <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/your-health/wind-farms-and-human-health>
10. **Dr Leventhall**, (2009) op cit
11. Opinion piece 8 October, 2012, New Scientist Magazine Issue 2885, pp 26-7 "Sickened by the Spin" Online version "The sickening truth about wind farm syndrome" <http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg21628850.200-the-sickening-truth-about-wind-farm-syndrome.html>, also broadcast on ABC Radio National's Science show, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2012, <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/scienceshow/curious-distribution-for-wind-turbine-sickness/4323486>  
 "Wind turbine sickness prevented by money drug" 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2011 <http://www.abc.net.au/unleashed/45730.html>  
 "Wind Turbines Power Mass Hysteria" 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2011 <http://www.abc.net.au/unleashed/4028112.html>  
 "Is wind turbine syndrome Mass Hysteria?" 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2011 <http://www.abc.net.au/unleashed/2868198.html>  
 Interview with Waleed Aly, on RN Drive, 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2012 <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/drive/panel-discussion3a-the-health-impact-of-wind-power/4066594>  
<http://theconversation.edu.au/wind-turbine-syndrome-a-classic-communicated-disease-8318>
12. Some examples include:  
 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2009, report of the Dean family's illness and forced abandonment of their home, due to health problems they experienced, coinciding with the start up of the Waubra Wind Development <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2009-07-15/wind-turbine-noise-forces-couple-out/1353808>  
 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2010, exposure of Trish Godfrey's gag agreement by Cheryl Hall, ABC Vic 7.30 <http://www.abc.net.au/news/video/2010/02/19/2825235.htm>  
 An extensive list of international media items makes the global nature of this problem clear, and the reports of ill health prior to May/June 2010 abound in Victoria and internationally. <http://www.wind-watch.org/news/2010/08/12/news-articles-about-wind-turbine-noise-and-health/>
13. Opinion piece 8 October, 2012, New Scientist Magazine Issue 2885, pp 26-7 "Sickened by the Spin" Online version "The sickening truth about wind farm syndrome" <http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg21628850.200-the-sickening-truth-about-wind-farm-syndrome.html>
14. 3<sup>rd</sup> letter at <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/wind-power-a-blessing-or-a-scam/story-fn558imw-1226346246835>
15. **Leventhall, Benton & Pelmeur** May 2003, A report for DEFRA "A review of published Research on Low Frequency Noise and its Effects" <http://www.wind-watch.org/documents/review-of-published-research-on-low-frequency-noise-and-its-effects/>
16. Opinion piece 8 October, 2012, New Scientist Magazine Issue 2885, pp 26-7 "Sickened by the Spin" Online version "The sickening truth about wind farm syndrome" <http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg21628850.200-the-sickening-truth-about-wind-farm-syndrome.html>, also broadcast on ABC Radio National's Science show, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2012, <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/scienceshow/curious-distribution-for-wind-turbine-sickness/4323486>  
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